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BIRDS BETTER KEPT OUT OF
RESERVOIRS THAN SHOT OUT

Traps and guns have usually been used to prevent birds from contaminating water reservoirs, but better results can be obtained by wiring or screening, according to a leaflet just issued by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Similar practices also are recommended for protecting fish hatcheries and rearing ponds against bird depredations.

The leaflet (No. 120), entitled "Excluding Birds from Reservoirs and Fishponds", was written by W. L. McAtee and S. E. Piper, of the U. S. Biological Survey, to meet the needs of the many people who make complaints to the Survey and ask for help in dealing with troublesome birds. Many of the species are protected by Federal or State bird-protective laws and may not be killed except under special permit.

It has been demonstrated, say the authors, that water reservoirs not more than 1,000 feet in the longest dimension can be satisfactorily and economically protected by wiring, and small pools by screening. The wiring method can be widely extended, and in many cases can be practically combined with partial screening to give protection to fishponds.

Preventive devices, the authors show, can be installed at moderate cost, frequently for less than the cost of patrolling property and killing the birds. From the conservation standpoint, they point out, it is certainly better to adopt measures that will prevent damage rather than first to countenance conditions that invite trouble and then carry on warfare against the birds.

Leaflet 120 explains and illustrates preventive measures in detail and describes how they have already been used in actual practice. Copies of the leaflet may be obtained from the U. S. Department of Agriculture at Washington.